(KANSAS). LETTER FROM A YOUNG ENGINEER PERFORMING SURVEYS FOR A RAILROAD THROUGH INDIAN COUNTRY. Guilford, Wilson County, Kansas: October 4, 1870. 4to, composed in ink totaling 3 pages. Good condition, some slight age staining, not affecting readability.

This letter was written by A. H. Perry, a civil engineer, who was doing survey work for a railroad company through Osage Indian lands, to his mother. The content reads, in part:

"In my last I wrote you that I was preparing to sell goods. But who can forsee the viscissitudes of human life. Now my business prospects are widely different. Then I had the letter of a dealer saying that he would furnish me with all the goods I wanted, but before I could possibly get ready, another party opened a store in our place, buying goods of the same firm & knocking me out of business & perhaps it is better for me. Since then I was sent for by Hoag, the superintendent of Indian Affairs to survey the 96 meridian west longitude for Gov't, for which I am to get about $130. I am now selected by the President of a R.R. company to make a topographical survey of a R. R. line & I think they will perhaps make me permanent Civil Engineer of the company. I got these appointments without seeking. There a number of surveyors in the county, but I had established a reputation that won. On all these surveys my wages are ($6) six dollars per day. There is more money without any of the risk in this than there is selling goods. I hope to get a contract soon from the Indian Department to survey the Osage lands. I have also instructed Judge Aiken to register of the W. S. Land Office at Augusta to put in a bid for me on the Osage Diminished Reserve Lands. If I am fortunate enough to secure the last, it will make me a small fortune if I live to complete it, and anyone is a good job. But whether I get any of them or not I cannot tell. If I get a good appointment or a contract, I am all right in a pecuniary point of view. I am afflicted by rheumatism so that I cannot work any more to amount to much. Leonidas is sick today with fever, but we hope it is transient. Oliver has been sick, but is playing today. Martha is up all the time, but her general health is no better. There seems to be no prospect of our ever being long free from the disorders of a miasmatic region, while we stay in the river valley. I do not think I will ever be able to work much more, although my health -- except rheumatism -- is tolerable good. There is a vast amount of enterprise in this country. They are opening farms, building up towns, mills, railroads &c. everywhere, even where a few months ago the Red Man roamed untrammeled with the pomp & bustle & activity of civilization. And so the world bustles on changing, changing ever. Portions of this country that I travelled over two short years ago, that knew not the white man, are now dotted over with farms and towns & villages and look as though they had been settled for years. The day on which the Osages signed the [Drum Creek] Treaty [on Sep 10 1870], Montgomery County had 7,400 inhabitants & this country laying next on the north & two years older, 200 more. We are pretty sure of at least one rail road, and if it comes through, I propose to make something out of it ... [signed] A. H. Perry. P.S. I forgot to tell you that your dream came to pass ... I did run a line to the Arkansas River, striking the river 40 miles above Ft. Gibson, 150 miles nearest you." The Drum Creek Treaty was passed by Congress on Jul 15 1870, and as stated, was ratified and signed by the Osage at a meeting in Montgomery County on Sep 10 1870. It provided that the remainder of Osage land in Kansas be sold and the proceeds be used to relocate the tribe to the Cherokee Outlet in the Indian Territory [now Oklahoma]. (4086)